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ANTHROPOLOGY IN THE BIBLE INSTITUTE AND BIBLE COLLEGE CURRICULUM

Claude E. Stipe

In a recent issue of Practical Anthropology James O. Buswell III (1955:142-56) discussed the place of anthropology in the Christian College curriculum. In the present article attention will be centered on the place of anthropology in those Christian institutions known as Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges. It is necessary to treat these schools separately because they differ from the Christian liberal arts colleges in their basic philosophy of education. Most of the Christian liberal arts colleges offer majors in the majority of the fields which are offered in secular institutions, the difference being that the courses are taught by Christian instructors in a Christian environment, and that a certain number of units in Bible are required. The Bible College, on the other hand, has the curriculum centered on the study of the Bible. Each graduate has the equivalent of a major in the field of Bible and Theology plus a major or minor in another field. Only those major fields are offered which are considered to be related to preparing the student for Christian service. This would preclude a major in a discipline such as science or mathematics. The average Bible Institute has fewer non-Biblically related courses and generally offers a three year diploma course which is often considered to fulfill the requirements for ministerial or missionary training.

Although a Christian liberal arts college may offer a certain major or minor solely because it is a valid field of study on the college or university level, this is not true of a Bible Institute or Bible College. In the latter schools the discipline must be demonstrated to be relevant to the goal to which the institutions are committed--that of training young people for future Christian service. While the Christian liberal arts college is dedicated to training Christian psychologists, geologists, chemists, educators, in training pastors, missionaries, church musicians, or educators for Christian day schools and mission schools.

For anthropology to have a place in the curriculum of Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges, then, it must be considered as more than a valid liberal arts course, it must be demonstrated to be directly applicable to the training of Christian workers. Anthropology fulfills this qualification in relation to the training of missionaries. In the opinion of this writer anthropology is second only to Bible and theology courses in the preparation of missionaries.

Areas of Anthropological Training

In the training of missionaries anthropology may be said to have validity in two different areas--general orientation and specific knowledge. The general orientation may be acquired by studying introductory courses in cultural and physical anthropology and ethnology. It bears repeating that one of the main assets of a study of anthropology is that it helps to rid the Westerner of his ethnocentrism. His judgments and attitudes concerning other societies are more valid when he realizes that there is no correlation between race and language, intelligence or culture. An anthropological orientation to culture will place many of the customs of a people into the proper perspective and enable the missionary to act wisely in unfamiliar situations. The proper training will aid in preventing him from making incorrect "snap" judgments concerning the character of the nationals. Examples of these judgments are often found in the missionary literature, such as the following characterization of the Japanese:

> They tend to be vacillating and unstable, and... they compare very unfavorably with the Chinese in point of commercial integrity and general reliability....Important moral principles have been all too lightly regarded, and lying and licentiousness must be regarded as national sins. (Glover, 1939: 154-55).

Such statements concerning national character are made with Western civilization as the point of reference and are based on a lack of understanding of non-Western societies. Only as the missionary understands the culture of these people will he be able to make the adjustments which are so vital to his ministry.

Besides the general anthropological orientation which the prospective missionary may receive from the introductory courses, he will also profit greatly from more specific studies such as area studies, acculturation, linguistics and comparative religions. No missionary should leave for a non-Western society until he has made as intensive a study as possible of the area and the people where he will work and live. The area surveys which may be offered within the framework of anthropology will do much to meet this need for a knowledge of the social and political organization, economy and religion of the non-Western society. A few hours or even days of orientation by a senior missionary after arriving on the field will never be a substitute for a systematic study of a specific society or culture area under the guidance of a trained anthropologist. Since the missionary deals specifically with the area of religion he should have as complete a knowledge as possible of the indigenous religions. It is next to impossible to teach a person concerning God and Christ without a knowledge of the religion of the person whom one is attempting to teach. A wider understanding will be gained by a study in comparative religions.

Applications To Missionary Service

There are many facets of missionary endeavor in which a knowledge of anthropology is important. First, it tends to facilitate the adjustments which a person must make. When a newly appointed missionary arrives on the field in which he is to labor there is a series of adjustments which must be made. Some of these are met in beginning any new job, such as learning a new routine and adjusting to the colleagues with whom one is to work.

There are other adjustments, however, which one does not meet in changing to a new job in his home country. He must adjust to the people he has come to serve and this adaptation cannot be readily accomplished without an extensive knowledge of the people and their customs. Too often the difficulty which a Westerner experiences in making the necessary adjustments is minimized, but Lindsell (1955:174) places it in the proper perspective, stating that when a missionary arrives on the field "he is faced with the immediate problem of making a series of adjustments so profound that his ways of life will be altered beyond the imagination of the uninitiated. According to one exhaustive survey (Lennox, 1933:79) fifteen per cent of all missionaries who are forced to leave the field do so because they are misfits. An anthropological background will aid greatly in the initial process of becoming adjusted to a foreign culture.

A second facet of missionary endeavor in which a knowledge of anthropology will be an invaluable aid is in establishing an indigenous church. The development of indigenous churches, that is, churches which are self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating is one of the major emphases in missions today. The extent to which most mission groups have worked toward this goal in the past reminds one of the way in which Great Britain worked to prepare her colonial possessions for self-rule and ultimate independence. The ideal was always held, but little was done to make it a reality in the forseeable future. Mission groups as a whole have done little to prepare the non-Western Christians of the world for establishing and maintaining their own churches. In many instances they have hindered rather than helped the development of such churches. A layman's committee reported:

> One's mind reviews the multitude of impressions made by...mission properties in the Far East. Some few stand out by their dignity and beauty. Most of the schools are well and substantially built in the

> Western manner, requiring Western care. Of the city churches the same can be said: they stand as a rule strong, high, uncompromisingly Western, fitted to our modes of worship, too expensive in upkeep, and too alien in conception, to be handed over with confidence to oriental use. (Hocking, 1932:13)

Not only were the structures Western, but in many cases the missionaries expected those whom they trained as national pastors and evangelists to adopt Western ways of living. One missionary to China wrote:

> There is a real sense in which the Chinese church leaders in many instances have been obliged, culturally speaking, to become Anglo-Saxon in order to reach positions of leadership in the church, and this is now disastrous...I am aware that the question of Western culture is not a simple one. No one in China is now opposed to science, and science is a very Western phenomenon. But this does not make it desirable that many Chinese Christian leaders write English better than they write Chinese. (A China Missionary, 1951:413)

Although both of the preceding examples are taken from China, this attitude is not limited to that country. Latourette (1944:210) cites the instance of one of the ablest Brahmin converts who had labored faithfully in the Scottish mission in India. Toward the end of his life he remarked bitterly: "I am just a black Scotchman."

With the rising tide of nationalism over much of the world, there is only one type of missionary endeavor which will be lasting--that which trains the nationals to take the responsibility for propagating the Gospel in their own land. This can be achieved only if the missionary understands the people among whom he is working. If he does not know the culture he will make many costly mistakes. The nationals whom the missionary may select for leadership because of certain qualities

considered to be outstanding in our society may be entirely unacceptable according to the leadership patterns of the non-Western society. The establishing of an indigenous church in any area is impossible without a complete understanding of the national culture.

A final way in which anthropological training is of importance to the missionary is in guiding his continued research after he has reached the field. Parsons (1956: 164) lists three reasons why a person must continue to do research after he has begun his missionary duties.

> First, a missionary cannot establish rapport if he does not understand the people and their culture. Without 'anthropological research', whether or not he is aware he is making such research, the missionary cannot win an understanding of the culture.
>
> Secondly, customs, and especially the rules of etiquette, are different everywhere and in most instances nobody will be able to tell the missionary in advance what those rules are. If he does not find out for himself (and finding it out would mean to engage in more anthropological research) he will step on everybody's toes.
>
> Thirdly, everybody is more or less ethnocentric. Only continuous anthropological research will enable the missionary to avoid that kind of ethnocentrism which will hurt his work or make it impossible for him to pursue it.

The more knowledge one has concerning diverse cultures, the sooner he will be able to understand the one in which he lives, for he will know better how to interpret the phenomena which he observes.

The Present Status of Curriculum

In considering the place of anthropology for missionary training in Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges, it

is necessary to have an idea of the number of missionaries who have received their training in these institutions. An unpublished survey by S. A. Witmer gives the following data. In 1948 approximately thirteen per cent of 10,138 Protestant missionaries had received their training exclusively in a Bible Institute or Bible College. If only these missionaries who are affiliated with boards usually considered to be the more evangelical were included, the per cent would no doubt be much higher. Witmer further stated that probably about fifty per cent of all Protestant missionaries had at one time attended a Bible Institute or Bible College.

If then so many of the missionaries are trained in these schools, and anthropology is so vital to a thorough missionary training, what is the present status of anthropology in the curriculum of the Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges? The answer to this question was sought by means of a catalog search in which the catalogs of sixty institutions were examined. Sixteen schools were found to offer anthropology, of which thirteen offer only a two or three hour course in general anthropology or missionary anthropology. Two of the remaining three schools offer one additional course and the third offers two additional courses. Although two schools list some area surveys, these have not been included since they are often surveys of missionary work rather than ethnological studies. A course in comparative religions or non-Christian religions is almost invariably taught, but for present purposes they are not considered to be anthropology because of the way in which the courses are often structured. In many cases the course is taught as an apologetic for Christianity, rather than as a tool to help the student actually understand the philosophy of such religions. The following course description from the catalog of one Bible College illustrates this point: "This study consists of an interpretation of the religions of the world, as well as a presentation of such facts concerning their origin and history as one needs to interpret them rightly, to

the end that the superlative elements of the Christian religion may be set forth and emphasized."

Needless to say, many of the courses which are offered are taught by one who has never had formal training in anthropology. This does not mean, however, that they can not be adequately taught. Many returned missionaries have had a wide experience in practical anthropology and are able to accomplish much by using a good textbook. Lindsell notes that:

> ...the best missionaries have been good anthropologists. Perhaps they knew little or nothing about the formal side of the science, but they had an intuitive grasp of the science without formal schooling in it. Thousands of missionaries have employed the science of anthropology subconsciously while many others have aided materially in the development of the science too. (1955:278)

The Future Outlook

The present situation concerning anthropology in the Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges is not especially encouraging. Is the future any brighter? This writer is certain that it is. There is a growing awareness on the part of the missions executives of the evangelical boards that there is a definite place for anthropology in the training of missionaries. At the fourth annual Mission Executives' Retreat at Winona Lake, Indiana in October, 1955, attention was given to training programs for missionaries. In the report of the findings committee concerning the curriculum of the Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges, the following courses were among those which were considered to be basic: language and/or phonetics, anthropology, non-Christian religions, and cultural and geographical area studies. The same committee stated that "an understanding of the cultures of non-Christian people" is one of the objectives which appears "to be basic in all programs for an adequately trained missionary." (pp. 56-57)

This report sounds encouraging and one might believe that on this basis all the schools which have missionary training programs would offer at least introductory courses in anthropology. There is little chance that this will occur, since there are many problems inherent in the introduction of anthropology courses into these schools. Many conservative Christians are still of the opinion that science is inherently anti-Christian and evil, and that as such it should be left entirely to unregenerate man. Since the science of anthropology has as its basis the theory of the organic evolution of man, people are often unable to realize that there is much which can be used by Christians. This attitude is changing, as is attested by the fact that Ramm's recent book (1955) has aroused much controversy in evangelical circles.

Another problem in introducing anthropology in Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges is the tabu on the discussion of facets of human biology and sexual life and practices. Much of the life of so-called primitives is centered on certain biological functions and changes which must be discussed in order to properly understand the people. The mention of menstruation tabus, female circumcision and many other common procedures may be ill-received, not only by some of the students, but also by the administration.

A third difficulty is that mentioned by Robert Taylor (1955:116) concerning the attitude that the use of methods is a denial of the power of the Holy Spirit of God and amounts to setting a limitation on His work. Some students have actually voiced the opinion that a missionary need only pray earnestly and he will be led of God to act wisely in all situations. I am sure that few would carry this far enough to say that one should not prepare his sermons lest he limit the ability of the Holy Spirit to speak through him. To the missionary anthropology in itself is not an end, but a means to an end. In this it corresponds closely with the learning of a foreign language to propagate the Gospel. Even as

the Gospel cannot be taught without the medium of a common language, it cannot be accurately taught without a common cultural medium, and the latter can only be attained by thorough study of a particular culture.

A final problem in introducing anthropology in Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges is not limited to these institutions alone. This is the lack of capable instructors. The Christian liberal arts colleges can aid in alleviating this problem by instituting undergraduate majors in anthropology. From these programs will come the future anthropology instructors in the Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges, as well as the Christian liberal arts colleges.

The problems which have been mentioned are by no means insurmountable. The Fort Wayne Bible College has made a start in anthropology and beginning in September of this year the Department of Missions and Anthropology will be in full operation. Fifteen semester hours in anthropology will be offered including: Principles of Language Learning, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology, Introduction to Physical Anthropology, Ethnology, Acculturation and Applied Anthropology and Comparative Religions. There is no intention to suggest this as a pattern for other schools, but these courses will provide some of the anthropological training which will be of the most help to the students.

It may be well to briefly discuss the placement of anthropology in the departmental structure. Many Bible Colleges have a Department of General Education in which are included introductory courses in such fields as psychology, philosophy, sociology and non-labratory science. It is possible to put anthropology in that structure, but there is an even better way to integrate the courses into the program. Many Christian anthropologists feel that the best situation is to have a Department of Missions and Anthropology. There are at least three good reasons for this. First, anthropology is being offered as missionary training and logically

goes with the missionary courses. Second, except for the general introductory courses, anthropology is too technical in nature to belong in the general education department. Third, it will allow an enlargement of the department for missionary training, making available a major as well as a minor in the missionary course.

Bible Institutes and Bible Colleges face a real challenge to train well equipped missionaries. It is our earnest hope that they will realize the importance of anthropological training in meeting that challange.

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REVIEW

Life's "Epic of Man"

The current series, "The Epic of Man," appearing in Life magazine has caused much comment among creationists, and many questions.

Beginning in the issue of November 7 of last year, four installments, of a proposed fifteen or more, have appeared to date: "Man Inherits the Earth," "The Dawn of Religion," (Dec.12), "The Growth of Society," (February 27, 1956), and "Man Shapes His Environment," (April 16.) The author of the series is Lincoln Barnett. He is assisted by scholars and institutions whose research, latest discoveries, and scientific views have been put at his disposal.

Also offered regularly, "for educators and adult discussion groups" is a series of Discussion Outlines. ($1 for the complete set covering the whole series.) Each one consists of 25 rather comprehensive questions covering the text material, and an annotated list of nine or ten authoritative books on the subject, both specialized and general. If one can read the text with any understanding, the book list is far more valuable than the questions.

The subject matter of the series, which is styled after the earlier Life feature, "The World We Live In," is on the "origins" of civilization." Thus, with the exception of the first chapter, man's cultural development is stressed rather than his physical change.

These first four chapters each develop certain aspects of prehistory, that is, the time before writing was developed. Parts I and II describe the Paleolithic, Part III the Mesolithic, and Part IV, the Neolithic.

One of the most striking and valuable features, which presumably may be discontinued in future chapters as cultures of recorded history are described, is the parallel description of a present-day primitive society illustrative of each pattern of culture traits. Australian Aboriginals illustrate the Paleolithic; Eskimos, the Mesolithic; and Berber tribesmen of North Africa, the Neolithic way of life.

These contemporary parallels immediately serve to remove the accompanying archeological reconstructions of prehistory from the realm of mere speculation and guesswork. Future chapters will treat great civilizations of the past, such as Sumer, ancient Egypt, Minoan Crete, and the beginnings of historic culture in Western Europe.

Any evaluation of this series must be couched in terms of both praise and reservation. First of all, its ideological assumptions are wholly evolutionary, as is to be expected. To this extent, certain reconstructions and conclusions are distorted and factually unwarranted, such as the alleged "discovery" of fire, the presumption that the "dawn" of religion occurred with the Neanderthal race, and that the Bear Cult "may have represented the first religious ceremonies of mankind." Such distortions, however, are clearly in the minority. The coverage itself is both up to date and reliable and does not have many of the faults commonly associated with popularized science.

The one most specific weakness, then, is the complete evolutionary orientation. Creationism, of course, is not even recognized as worthy of comment, chiefly because liberal Christianity today has accepted evolution and made it unnecessary any longer for the evolutionary scientist to bother with any serious consideration of an alternative. Thus, Mr. Barnett writes in the opening chapter:

> The spiritual qualities which differentiate man from the brutes are the concern of philosophers and

> theologians. They accept the fact of man's relationship to animals and his physical evolution from them, finding no point of conflict with the religious concepts of divinity and immortality. "Today," observed the famous Baptist minister, the Rev. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, "the general idea of evolution is taken for granted as gravitation is."

When the time comes that evangelicals do something in science to the extent that they become established authorities again and the writers of accepted text-books, then the evolutionary structure of scientific thinking will have to give way to the reasonableness of a sound Creationism cloaked in respectability.

In his selection of examples of fossil man, Barnett has wisely stuck to those which are the least controversial, and for whom the best authenticated evidence can be produced. Of course, the physical types of the bodies of these men are largely hypothetical as far as flesh and expressions are concerned. However, the reader will notice that the author is not dogmatic on these matters:

> If Homo sapiens did indeed live at so early a date he might have looked somewhat like the hypothetical people shown in the painting at the left.

In fact, with the single exception of the picture purporting to be man's "first encounter with the miracle of fire," all of the illustrations are completely reasonable and based strictly upon archaeological remains and ethnological parallels. Furthermore, their colorful capturing of composite cultures is certainly valuable and instructive to say the very least.

It should be pointed out that the very reserve with which many of the reconstructions are handled reveals something of the reliability of the positive assertions which are based upon more conclusive evidence. With the above-mentioned exceptions regarding evolution, there is

no undue dogmatism in the scientific reconstructions set forth. For example:

> "...mystic symbols hinting that the inspiration behind them was not esthetic but magical or reverent."
>
> "Decorated implements like these from France may have been carried at religious rites."
>
> "Statuettes of women at Stone Age sites may have served a symbolic function in mystic rites."
>
> "...model sailboat...may have been a child's toy."
>
> "Clay figurines suggest that Neolithic people affected a high coiffure."

If, then, the text and illustrations are of such authentic value, upon what scientific principles is this reliability based? How can we trust the description of a prehistoric way of life when there are no written records?

Three basic bodies of evidence, I believe, serve to reveal how much can be interpreted from what would seem to be mute artifacts of a long dead culture.

1. The actual finds. This point hardly needs elaboration. A bone needle is a key to a whole complex of culture traits, (tailored clothing, for example,) just the same as a single human tooth proving something as complex as human society, or a plow proving the existance of agriculture.

2. Parallels with living cultures, and deductions therefrom. As indicated above, this is one of the major values of the series, namely, the publishing of a detailed account of a tribe illustrating the traits of a prehistoric era. This finds a prominent place in the method of most prehistorians, and is used much in Barnett's own text:

> The parallel customs of living Paleolithic people suggest that such rituals must have rested on three concepts of man's relation to the supernatural world: mana, magic, and taboo.
>
> By analogy with later Neolithic people it has been inferred that prestige derived...from a social status based on age, wisdom, or kinship ties.
>
> By ethnological analogy it is presumed that...
>
> Studies of primitive peoples living in the world today lead to the belief that...
>
> Like those of Modern tribesmen these ancient ceremonies probably...

3. Interpretation in terms of present anthropological theory. There is a great deal known today about the function of primitive culture. Prehistoric interpretation in a context of such data long since validated by the use of the comparative method in extensive field work, is not as difficult and mysterious as it might seem to be. For example, it is known that one of the characteristic differences between primitive culture and the cultures of Western Civilization is that the primitive ascribes a maximum of causal explanations to supernatural agencies, the sophisticate, or "civilized" man, a minimum. It is also known that the religious practitioner in primitive society takes a vital role in cases of sickness and death. Thus Barnett, illustrating the simultaneous application of all three of the above bodies of evidence, writes:

> Believing as he did in supernatural causes of natural events, early man resorted to the shaman when afflicted with puzzling bodily ills. As with primitive tribes today, the shaman sought to exorcise malevalent spirits by incantation and the use of magic fetishes or magic spells.

This is an attractive and most instructive series, so far, a unique journalistic-educational venture, and promises to be a valuable and vivid document on the classic civilizations of the early historic period.

James O. Buswell, III

Wheaton College
Wheaton, Illinois

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN EDITORSHIP

Beginning with the May-June issue there will be a change in the editorship of Practical Anthropology. The present editor will be replaced by William A. Smalley. In addition to this change the positions of Associate Editor, Book Review Editor and News Editor are being set up and will be filled by Eugene A. Nida, James O. Buswell, III and Claude E. Stipe respectively.

We are glad to have the News Editor, Claude Stipe, as the contributor of this month's article. Stipe holds a master's degree in anthropology from UCLA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Auca Problem

To the Editor:

It was with keen interest that I read your reflections on the Auca "tragedy" in which five keen young missionaries established what is to our knowledge the first bloodless contact, though brief, with the savage Auca Indians.

On the basis of the five men's biographies and the careful annotations in their diaries concerning the Aucas (some dating back as far as four or five years), I am certain that it is safe to say that these five were called to follow the steps of Him who was pierced "to redeem us to God....out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." As one widow so bravely puts it, they lost the battle, but won the victory." For those of us whose hearts are set toward the Bible-less tribes of the world, their death was a great triumph. The deep and unforgettable effect their death will have upon the Church in relation to pioneer missions is still beyond the scope of calculation. There is no looking back with remorse on that score....

One thing seems hard to comprehend from a distance and that is that there is no present way to make a safe anthropological study of the Aucas. Contact was established with the only existing source of information, but even that source has been subjected to eight years of what is called in Andean Ethnology "transculturizacion." It was reported to me by a Shell Oil Company Executive in Tulsa, Oklahoma that the Royal Shell Oil Company lost more than 100 employees to this savage tribe, although expert anthropological help was available to them. Shell made a dramatic effort to establish some friendly contact with this tribe...in vain. Other expeditions into this area have lost as many as sixty men at the hand of perhaps South America's most cruel tribe.

This information was known to Nate, Jim, Pete, Roger and Ed. But the heart of the martyr is deeply pressed with the urgency of the hour. Can the missionary stand by knowing that the vicious circle of vengency is slowly finishing off a people when that people has made an aggressive show of friendship in response to repeated contacts from the air? Should he wait through the painstaking months and perhaps years before a sufficient mastery of the language can be obtained through a difficult informant situation when that tribe's seemingly evident friendship is beckoning him to a situation far more favorable for studies preparatory to evangelism and Bible translation?

Wycliffe's Summer Institute of Linguistics has chosen the slow way through the only available Auca language informant. This decision was made and studies were begun over a year ago, but we cannot look back over the death of these five without a deep admiration for the courage and dedication of those who calculated the risk and took it to His glory. How long it will be before our translators are in a position to establish safe linguistic contact with the Aucas it is difficult to say. Meanwhile our hearts are moved with compassion for the lives of those members of the tribe who will have gone into a Christless eternity before then. It was for these lives especially that the risk was taken.

Other elements than the evangelical Christian are now at work to establish contact with the tribe. I will not go into the motives that prompt these efforts, but let me say that there seems to be one common denominator to them all. "I would have done it differently because I have more anthropological, linguistic or psychological training."

Permit me to make a couple of corrections to the data which was available to you at the writing of the article. Auca is not a term which is used to describe the Cofan, Secoyah, Jivaro or Zaparo tribes, all "non-Quechua speaking tropical forest Indians of the eastern

part of Ecuador." It is a Quechua word meaning, roughly, "savage." Cofan Indians have another word "tetete" which means very much the same thing. In Ecuador, the word Auca is applied to what seems to be two linguistically related ethnogroups, and their language is not related to the Zaparo's. This latter tribe has been greatly reduced by the Aucas and disease and are now living principally on the Conambo River. An article on Zaparo will soon be forthcoming, probably in IJAL, by our SIL workers.

The linguistic group being studied at present is the Auwishiri group that seem to appear more frequently in the Curaray River region but also cover a good bit of the territory between the Napo and the Curaray region. Words taken by the five men confirm the identity of the killers as being this same linguistic group.

It would be of much interest to those of us of SIL to know if a consecrated anthropologist might be available to help in the present efforts being continued by the missions whose fellow's were involved. If such an anthropologist would be available at no financial obligation or burden to the missions involved I think it might be wise to have him contact Mr. Abraham Van Der Puy, president of the Intermissions Fellowship and biographer of the five men that were killed. His address is: Mr. Abraham Van Der Puy, Casilla 691, Quito, Ecuador.

May I add my congratulations for Bill Smalley's article on language learning for missionaries.

Donald H. Burns
Director in Ecuador
Casilla 1007
Quito, Ecuador

To the Editor:

In talking with Jack Shepherd, Chairman of the Missions Department here at St. Paul, we felt that we should make just a brief comment regarding your last article concerning the missionaries slain by the Auca Indians....

We felt your suggestions were excellent but that more commendation could be made of the approach made by the martyrs. I was pleasantly surprised to hear Dr. Hoebel, Chairman of the Anthropology Department at the University speak very commendably of the thorough approach made by the missionaries....

G. Linwood Barney
St. Paul Bible Institute
St. Paul 4, Minn.

(Ed. Note--I am afraid that my editorial permitted the unintended impression that I was condemning the five missionaries. Three of the men, McCully, Elliot and Saint were acquaintances of mine, and I had the highest regard for them. One of the men and I came to think a great deal of one another while living with three other fellows in a private home while attending college. For personal reasons especially, I think it is impossible for me to entertain a critical spirit toward the men or what they did.--R.B.T.)

To the Editor:

You are to be congratulated on the splendid work and the purpose behind the editing of Practical Anthropology. Your field is one which we as believers--and especially as ministers--have decidedly neglected, only to find the loss our own. Some of the articles have been most provoking and stimulating; I have been forced to re-evaluate some of my trite thought-patterns. This has been

very good in that it has demanded change of attitude along with the strengthening of convictions.

...The real reason for this letter is to compliment you on the editorial remarks on "Reflections of the Auca Tragedy" in the January-February 1956 issue.

...I appreciated the attitude in which you wrote the article; for whether or not they knew well principles of anthropology, they were His sons and He did allow this to come into their lives. Your approach of latitude for facts which were not available to you at the time of writing is most commendable....I think that your editorial is quite pertinent and very badly needed.

Clarence G. Stroupe, Jr.
Huntsville, Alabama

The Comparative Method

To the Editor:

I will confine my remarks here,... mainly in a criticism of the usage of the phrase "the comparative method" by James O. Buswell, III, in the last (Nov-Dec 1955) issue of Practical Anthropology (p. 143). Although the context in which it is found elucidates his connotation of the phrase, I would insert the caution that anthropologists have by and large discarded the major premises of the historically defined "comparative method," and would hardly uphold Buswell's assertion that it is "one of anthropology's greatest assets" (p. 143). It must be remembered that the comparative method was the major tool popularized by such classical evolutionists as Tylor, Spencer and Morgan, who deductively illustrated diachronic fantasies with synchronic "survivals." It may rightly be said that they made such positive contributions as organizing large masses of data and written accounts; but they repeatedly drew their theoretical conclusions by lifting facts out of context, emphasizing form to the exclusion of function.

I heartily agree that comparisons, or the comparative point of view, "became basic for all anthropological generalizations" (p. 144); anthropology is unique among the social sciences in its insistence upon cross-cultural investigation. But I am quite sure that Buswell did not really mean to equate comparisons and the comparative method theoretically or methodologically, though he did terminologically....

....it might be pointed out that since scientific objectivity is influenced to a large extent by terminological consistency, we must guard against using terms in ways other than those in which they have been used historically. This is by far more conducive to the progress of any science; stabilization of concepts, and the terms that describe those concepts, is a necessary step to clarity of presentation.

Gifford S. Nickerson
Evanston, Illinois

NOTES AND NEWS

Geographer Turns to Anthropology

Mr. George Jennings, Instructor in Anthropology at Bethel College, Minnesota, is beginning work toward a Ph.D. in anthropology at the University of Minnesota.

Jennings holds a master's degree in human geography and taught in the University of Minnesota Department of Geography for five years before going to Bethel. His interests are centered in cultural anthropology and, particularly religion. He is also Assistant Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Minneapolis.

Missionary Works for Anthropology Degree

G. Linwood Barney, former linguistic missionary among the Meo people of Indochina, is working for an M.A. in anthropology at the University of Minnesota. Meanwhile he is teaching in the Missions Department at St. Paul Bible Institute.

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